

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 A-01 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01

L-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SCA-01 PER-05 EB-11

COME-00 AID-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 INT-08 PC-10 SCS-03

PA-04 USIA-15 OC-06 CCO-00 DRC-01 /157 W

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R 261400Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7534

INFO AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMCONSUL KISANGANI

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 3675

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP PFOR CG

SUBJECT: FUTURE STATUS OF KISANGANI AND BUKAVU

REF: KINSHASA 3219

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: I RECOMMEND THAT A DECISION ON THE FUTURE OF THE BUKAVU AND KISANGANI CONSULATES BE HELD IN ABEYANCE, AT LEAST UNTIL NEW AMBASSADOR HAS HAD OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS PROS AND CONS AT FIRST HAND. END SUMMARY.

2. I HAVE CAREFULLY WEIGHED IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR POSITION HERE OF SCENARIO ADVANCED IN BRADFORD MEMORANDUM OF APRIL 2 PROPOSING EARLY PHASE-OUT OF BUKAVU AND KISANGANI FOR REASONS OF ECONOMY. IN DOING SO I CONSULTED OTHER MEMBERS OF COUNTRY TEAM AND STAFFS OF AFFECTED CONSULATES. WHILE OPINIONS WERE NOT ENTIRELY UNANIMOUS, STRONGEST ARGUMENTS WERE ADVANCED BY THOSE CONVINCED THAT CLOSURE WOULD BE A MISTAKE. THESE ARGUMENTS ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW.

3. PRESIDENT MOBUTU REQUESTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE  
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CONSULATES IN THE FIRST PLACE AND VIEWS THEM AS IMPORTANT

TOKENS OF US GOOD WILL AND CONFIDENCE IN ZAIRE'S FUTURE. IN FACT, HE RECENTLY URGED US TO OPEN A CONSULATE IN MBANDAKA, CAPITAL OF HIS HOME REGION OF EQUATEUR. HE WOULD CONSIDER CLOSURE NOT ONLY A SIGN OF DIMINISHING US INTEREST IN ZAIRE BUT ALSO, GIVEN HIS WITH-ME-OR-AGAINST-ME PERSONALITY, A PERSONAL AFFRONT. THIS WOULD HURT OUR UNUSUAL ACCESS TO HIM AND KEY MINISTERS AND ADVERSELY AFFECT US INTERESTS HERE A TIME WHEN WE ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING SEVERAL LARGE-SCALE INVESTMENT PROJECTS (SOME OF THEM IN THE HALF-BILLION DOLLAR CATEGORY).

4. ZAIRE IS VIRTUALLY UNIQUE AMONG BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN THAT IT HAS A BRIGHT ECONOMIC FUTURE AND ITS LEADERSHIP PLACES DELIBERATE CONFIDENCE IN THE ROLE US CAPITAL AND KNOW-HOW CAN PLAY IN ACHIEVING IT. THE MEDIUM AND LONG TERM PROSPECTS FOR US TRADE AND INVESTMENT ARE GOOD. KISNAGANI IS TO WITNESS A MAJOR EXPANSION AND A LEADING US OIL COMPANY IS PROSPECTING FOR PETROLEUM IN HAUT ZAIRE; BUKAVU'S TOURIST AND MINING POTENTIAL IS ATTRACTING INCREASING INTEREST FROM FOREIGN INVESTORS.

5. BUKAVU AND KISANGANI ARE INVALUABLE POLITICAL LISTENING POSTS STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN THE TWO AREAS WHERE POST-INDEPENDENCE OPPOSITION TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN KINSHASA LINGERED LONGEST. REPORTING FROM THE CONSULATES ON THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THOSE AREAS RESULTING FROM THE RECENT ZAIRIANIZATION MEASURES HAS PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH HIGHLY USEFUL PERSPECTIVE ON COUNTRY-WIDE REPERCUSSIONS THAT COULD ONLY HAVE COME FROM QUALIFIED OBSERVERS PERMANENTLY STATIONED THERE.

6. AMERICAN CITIZEN POPULATION IN BOTH CONSULAR DISTRICTS IS GROWING. THERE ARE 210 AMCITS REGISTERED IN BUKAVU; PEACE CORPS TRAINEES SWELL AMCIT POPULATION OF CONSULAR DISTRICT BY 15 TO 120 DEPENDING ON PC TRAINING SCHEDULE; AND AVERAGE OF 20-25 AMERICAN TOURISTS ARE PRESENT ON ANY GIVEN DAY. IN KISANGANI'S CONSULAR DISTRICT THERE IS A TOTAL OF 172 AMERICANS, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH ARE MISSIONARIES IN REMOTE AREAS. TOTAL PCV POPULATION IN ZAIRE (MAINLY SCATTERED IN INTERIOR) IS LIKELY TO RISE  
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FROM PRESET 250 TO 400 BY SEPTEMBER 1975. REMOTENESS OF BOTH CONSULATES FROM CAPITAL AND FREQUENTLY ARBITRARY EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY BY LOCAL OFFICIALS MAKE IT IMPERATIVE TO KEEP CONSULAR OFFICIALS IN THE AREA HAVING READY ACCESS TO LEADING REGIONAL, MILITARY, AND CND OFFICIALS. EMBASSY CANNOT PROVIDE FROM AFAR KIND OF CLOSE CONSULAR SUPPORT AMCITS IN GENERAL AND PCVS IN PARTICULAR RELY ON.

7. IN BROADER PERSPECTIVE OF DEPARTMENT'S SEARCH FOR ECONOMIES THROUGH CLOSURE OF CONSULAR POSTS, I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO WEIGH LONG TERM US INTERESTS SERVED BY SMALL POSTS THAT ARE STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN A DYNAMIC COUNTRY WITH PROMISING FUTURE, SUCH AS ZAIRE, AGAINST ANY INTEREST SERVED BY OPENING OR MAINTAINING RESIDENT US REPRESENTATION IN THE GROWING NUMBER OF UNVIALE MINI-STATES THAT HAVE BEEN EMERGING ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE WHERE OUR INTERESTS ARE MINIMAL.

8. THIS EMBASSY HAS NEVER MAINTAINED THAT EVERY AUTHORIZED POSITION WAS NECESSARY FOR THE DISCHARGE OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES HERE AND BOTH STAFFING AND PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN KEPT UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW WITH A VIEW TO ECONOMIES. AS A RESULT, IN THE TWO YEARS ALONE I HAVE BEEN HERE, US POSITIONS WILL HAVE DECLINED FROM 256 TO 146 BY THE END OF JULY. THIS REDUCTION HAS BEEN CAREFULLY MANAGED AND THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO OUR EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THE CONSULATES, BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN THEM AND THEIR HIGH VISIBILITY, ARE IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CATEGORY FROM, SAY, PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO AID OR ZAMISH IN KINSHASA.

9. MY CONCLUSION IS THAT WE SHOULD NOT MOVE TO CLOSE EITHER CONSULATES. MY RECOMMENDATION WOULD BE THAT, AT THE VERY LEAST, ACTION ON BRADFORD PROPOSAL BE DEFERRED UNTIL THE NEW AMBASSADOR HAS ARRIVED AND HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE HIS OWN FIRST-HAND ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE OF THE TWO POSTS IN QUESTION AND THE LIKELY DAMAGE TO US INTERESTS IN THE EVENT A DECISION WERE TO BE MADE TO CLOSE THEM. NEWLIN

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